

ON A NEW RHYTIPHORA IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM, MELBOURNE.

By Arthur M. Lea, F.E.S.

Some time ago, Mr. C. French sent for examination a very large *Rhytiphora*, with the request that I should describe it if new. This it appeared to be, and I would gladly have described it then, but thinking it possible that such a fine insect would not have escaped description if in other entomologists' hands, and that the Zoological Records are usually about two years behind in their records, I deferred describing it till after hearing from Mr. C. J. Gahan, of the British Museum, to whom I wrote. In the interim I returned the specimen to Mr. French, and he gave it to the National Museum, from whence, at my request, I have again received it.

The species is certainly allied to *R. dallasi*, but is even more magnificent than that fine species, from which it differs in being considerably larger, the clothing denser, somewhat differently disposed, and not uniformly silvery. The most noticeable difference is in the elytral costæ; counting the suture as the first, then the third and fourth on each elytron are conjoined close to apex, with the space between densely clothed with ochreous instead of silvery pubescence, and the space equal to or even more than the space between the second and third. In *dallasi*, the third and fourth are not conjoined at apex, and the space between them is much less than that between the second and third. On the prothorax, the dark transverse lines are two in number instead of four, as in *dallasi*.

Mr. Gahan wrote—"I have not described nor do I know any species of *Rhytiphora* answering to the description you have sent me. It appears certainly to be distinct from *dallasi*. In all our four specimens of *dallasi*, the white elytral band between the third and fourth costæ is very narrow, barely more than a line, and in one specimen it is partly broken up into spots. I notice that in the male of *dallasi* there is no pubescent depression at each side behind the posterior margin of the first abdominal segment, as there is in most of the other species of *Rhytiphora*. But this sexual character varies a good deal, being more pronounced in some species, and very feeble in others. Have you noticed the sex of the specimen of the new species?"

I was under the impression that the type is a female, as although the abdomen is conspicuously variegated, the pubescent depressions common to so many males of the sub-family are entirely absent; and in *Rhytiphora* I know of no other external feature by which the

sex of an unique specimen may be determined. Still, if *dallasi* is without such depressions in the male, quite possibly the male of this species is without them.

At Mr. French's request, the species is named after the late Sir William Macleay.



RHYTIPHORA MACLEAYI, SP. NOV.

Black. Densely clothed with white and ochreous pubescence, in places glabrous or with black pubescence; the elytra conspicuously striped.

Head large, with rather coarse but partly concealed punctures, with a narrow continuous median line. Antennæ of moderate length. *Prothorax* about one-fourth wider than long, transversely rugose. *Elytra* widest across shoulders, sides thence regularly diminishing in width to apex, where each is acutely spined; with four almost equidistant feeble but conspicuous elevations on each, the first very close to suture, the second terminated at about the apical fifth, the third commencing just within the shoulder, and the fourth just below it, these two conjoined near apex; all these ridges have small granules towards the base, sometimes rounded, but often acute, and all have coarse punctures gradually decreasing in size posteriorly, but smaller on the subsutural ridge than the others; the margin is narrowly ridged and smooth. Length 43, width 15 mm.

Habitat.—Western Australia: Kookynie.

The clothing on the head is ochreous, but becomes whitish below the eyes and about the mouth; on each side of the base near the middle there is a narrow black patch, straight on its inner, and curved on its outer edge. On the prothorax, the pubescence is whitish, but in places more or less deeply stained with ochreous, and leaving two curved black transverse lines, a median one not interrupted in middle, and a sub-basal one interrupted in middle. The scutellum has ochreous clothing, margined with black. On each elytron the stripes are as follow:—An extremely narrow pale

sutural stripe, a narrow black stripe, a wide silvery stripe, a narrow black stripe, terminated at the apical fifth, a wide silvery stripe, a narrow black stripe conjoined near tip with another on the outer edge of a wide ochreous stripe, a wide silvery stripe, and then the narrow black margin; the white stripes about the base are more or less stained with ochreous. Under surface with silvery pubescence marked with ochreous stripes (one at apex of each abdominal segment) and blotches, and black patches (a longitudinal one towards each side of metasternum, and a curved one—very narrow across middle—on each abdominal segment). Antennal joints white tipped with black, but the black increasing till at the seventh it covers half the surface, and the eleventh is white at the extreme base only. The black patches and stripes are due either to the surface being bare or to being clothed with very short black pubescence.